

The GLOW of the RUBIES

By
FRANCIS PERRY
ELLIOTT

Illustrations by
RAY WALTERS

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Richard Lightnut, an American with an affected English accent, receives a present from a friend in China.

CHAPTER II.—The present proves to be a pair of pajamas. A letter hints of surprises to the wearer.

CHAPTER III.—Lightnut dons the pajamas and late at night gets up for a smoke. His servant, Jenkins, comes in and, failing to recognize Lightnut, attempts to put him out. Thinking the servant crazy, Lightnut changes his clothes intending to summon help. When he reappears Jenkins falls on his neck with joy, confirming Lightnut's belief that he is crazy.

CHAPTER IV.—Jenkins tells Lightnut of the encounter he had with a hideous Chinaman dressed in pajamas.

CHAPTER V.—In a message from his friend, Jack Billings, Lightnut is asked to put up "the kid" for the night on his way home from college. Later Lightnut finds a beautiful girl in black pajamas in his room.

CHAPTER VI.—Lightnut is shocked by the girl's drinking, smoking and slangy talk.

CHAPTER VII.—She tells him her name is Francis and puzzles him with a story of her love for her sister's room-mate, named Francis. Next morning the girl is missing and Lightnut hurries to the boat to see her off. He is accosted by a husky college boy, who calls him "Dicky," but he does not see the girl.

CHAPTER VIII.—Jack Billings calls to spend the night with Lightnut. They discover priceless rubies hidden in the buttons of the pajamas.

CHAPTER IX.—Billings dons the pajamas and retires.

CHAPTER X.—Lightnut later discovers in his apartment a beefy person in mutton-chop whiskers and wearing pajamas. Jenkins calls the police, who declare the intruder to be a criminal, called "Foxy Grandpa."

CHAPTER XI.—The intruder declares he is Lightnut's guest and appeals to the latter in vain.

CHAPTER XII.—He is hustled off to jail.

CHAPTER XIII.—In the morning Lightnut is astonished to find Billings gone, and more astonished when he gets a message from the latter, demanding his clothes. Lightnut sends it to Tarrytown. Billings's home, discovers "Francis," the girl of the pajamas, on the train.

CHAPTER XIV.—Lightnut speaks to her and alludes to the night before. She declares indignantly that Lightnut never saw her in black pajamas. At Tarrytown Francis is met by a husky college youth, who hails Lightnut as "Dicky." The latter ignores the boy, who then threatens to thrash him for offending Francis. Lightnut takes the next train home.

CHAPTER XV.—Billings storms over the outrage of his arrest. He and Lightnut discover mysterious Chinese characters on the pajamas.

CHAPTER XVI.—Professor Doosenberry is called in to interpret the hieroglyphics.

CHAPTER XVII.—He raves over what he calls the lost silk of Si-Ling-Chi.

CHAPTER XVIII.—The writing declares that a person wearing the pajamas will take on the semblance of the previous wearer. The professor borrows the pajamas for experiment.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Family Black Sheep.

Presently I got in a word:

"Then judge, I have your permission to speak to Francis?"

"Permission?" He lifted his hands and eyes. "You certainly have, my boy—don't I make it clear? Why, I'm simply delighted—and grateful—oh, so grateful to you!"

And, by Jove, he meant it—there was no mistaking his fervency! But it made me feel like a silly ass, you know. Custom or no custom, it just made me a bit nifty to think her father would speak this way. Might be good form, but it appeared rotten taste—lots of things seem that way, dash it! Suggested this to Pugsley once, but he was so devilish shocked couldn't eat his luncheon—wasn't able to fetch a dashed word for four hours!

"Why, Lightnut," he dropped to a chair, leaning forward, with shining eyes, "you can't possibly know what this means just at this time! Why, if you hadn't offered to speak to Francis, it's not likely that any one else ever would!"

"Judge!" I ejaculated, shocked.

"Who would want to?" And he grimaced horribly.

"Oh, I say now!" I protested warmly.

"My boy, I tell you I know—you don't!" He lifted his hand eloquently, deflecting the corners of his mouth—oh, such a way! "No, stree, I tell you there's not another living man would dare chance it!" He threw himself backward, puffing his cheeks at me and wailing his eyes frightfully. "In fact, hereabouts—where Francis is known, there have been two men—only just two—who ever had the temerity to do it."

"Oh!" I commented. Wondered if one of these was the other chap she was engaged to.

He proceeded impressively: "One of these, my dear sir, was our rector—a most charming and venerable old man, now nearly eighty-three and partially paralyzed and deaf; lives a

sweet, patient life all alone, you know, with no one in the world to care for him. Well, sir," he stiffened dramatically, leveling one finger at me, "do you think that Francis would even listen to him?"

Did I? Well, dash it, did I?

But I tried to mumble something polite.

"And then—" he puffed as he relighted his cigar, "there's Jack's chauffeur, you know."

"Eh, Jack's—what's that?" I gripped the arms of my chair.

"Yes," he nodded, "Jack's chauffeur. Oh, I was so disappointed at the result of his effort!" The old gentleman slipped back in his chair with a sigh. "Francis just swore at him, you know!"

"By Jove!" I managed to get out—and yet, somehow, I was devilish pleased about it.

"You see?" And he spread out his hands. "Absolutely no sense of appreciation, you observe; and it had seemed such a splendid chance! You see they had been so intimate—oh, are still, for that matter."

I caught my breath. "In—intimate!" I stammered. "You don't mean Francis and this chauffeur?"

"Oh, yes," carelessly, "Scoggins is all right; very superior young man for his position—fond of Francis, you know, and I really think has great influence." He puffed complacently an instant. "Fact is, they are always together when Francis is home"—puff—"motoring, bouting, or else off somewhere camping together."

"What—what's that—not camping?" I looked at him aghast. "Oh, come now, judge—really you don't mean that, do you—not camping together?"

I spoke excitedly, but he just stared at me with an expression of blank surprise.

"Eh? Why, certainly, my dear boy—for weeks at a time—and why not?" His shift manifested some impatience. "Pshaw, Lightnut," he growled, flicking his ash, "what's the odds—why be so particular? I don't mind!" He jammed his hands into his trousers pockets till it seemed he would go through them. "I tell you, I'm glad I'm democratic!"

"Oh!" I uttered, seeing a light.

So that was it! Well, in any case, I knew now that I was a republican, by Jove! Never did know before what I was and it was a devilish relief to find out. Half made up my mind, then and there, I would vote next election—never had, you know; few of our set ever did. Pugsley, for one, held it to be doubtful form.

"Bright, self-made young man," I caught as I came back. By Jove, he was still talking about that beastly chauffeur! "Such fine morals, you know."

"Oh, dash it, yes!" And I think this must have been when I broke the corner out of a filling.

"That was why I was so sorry he failed with Francis," he continued regretfully; "but you may succeed better—oh, I don't know but what it will do just as well!"

"Thanks—er—awfully!" I murmured weakly.

"Oh, I think so—oh, yes!" He bobbed his head as though he were quite resigned to it—then went on thoughtfully:

"And anyhow, if Francis finds you are in deadly earnest, why it—" His voice dropped off musically: "Well, I believe that would make it easier—oh, lots easier for Scoggins."

I blinked a little with my free eye. Wasn't sure, you know, but somehow it seemed to me a rum thing to say—almost offensive, dash it! But then, for that matter, everything was rum of late—so that counted for nothing. Fact was, it just seemed to me like there was something in the air—everybody seemed so queer—well, jolly muddled, I should call it! Idea had been gradually coming to me that I was the only one who appeared to have any clear understanding of things; and somehow the realization just made me devilish nervous—the responsibility, don't you know!

And just then the judge looked suddenly at his watch, muttered something, and hitched up to the table strewn with papers. He bent over these with a frown, coughed oddly, glanced at me—and bent again with a mutter. Of course, I saw he was annoyed over sudden consciousness of the break he had made, and was striving to cover his embarrassment.

And, by Jove, it seemed to me he ought to feel embarrassed, for the very rummest thing yet was this crazy infatuation for this infernal chauffeur. It was pitiful—oh, disgusting, if you ask me—and the more so because it was something she did not share. I knew she didn't, you know! No, it was plain enough, dash it, that between her father and this mucker of a chauffeur, my poor darling was being crowded to the what's-its-name. This was what she had meant—had hinted at—and, by Jove, I was ready to wager anything on it; eager to put up all I was worth, you know!

Didn't know, dash it, how much I was worth. Went down in Wall street one day and asked old Morley, my man of affairs, but forgot what he said. Never could remember afterward whether it was one million or ten and always hated to ask again.

It was he had stared at me so and seemed so oddly surprised, I just worked off some jolly apologetic rubbish and got out. Pugsley thought I must have violated some rotten, silly law of commercial ethics—that sort of thing, you know; declared that his attorney had had the dashed impertinence once to ask him about some investments, so he got another man and gave him a power of what's-its-name. Never was bothered now, he said, by checks or reports or any boring distractions of that sort, this man just kept him supplied with money, and once in a while he scrawled his name on something—all he had to do. Devilish simple, you see, but then Pugsley is so ingenious, so—oh, clever, you know.

"H'm!" coughed the judge. "Er—h'm!" And I stopped snapping the cover of my cigarette case, thinking



"H'm!" Coughed the Judge.

he was about to say something, but he did not look up. By Jove, how I wished that he were really busy, so I might slip out without danger of offending him! But I was afraid to chance it—did so want to rub him right, don't you know, on account of Francis. Knew he was still feeling a bit plucked over his slip of the tongue—showed plainly he was bothered, you know; you could tell by his puckered brows and the way he kept clearing his throat. So meantime, knowing that the best thing was to appear unconscious—just give him time, you know—I fell carelessly to jingling some coins in my pocket and tapping my foot upon the hardwood, as I hummed a devilish neat little air from La Juvie that I almost knew by heart:

"Qu'il, l'apprenne de vous? Helas, je vous implore, benissez mon epoux—"

By Jove, I had just got that far, when he shook his head with a kind of snort, threw down his pen, and got to his feet, facing me with a sickly smile.

"I am going to ask you to excuse me, my dear Lightnut"—came right out frankly like that, you know! "But the fact is—" he opened and shut his watch—nervously, you know—"I have just realized how—"

But I stopped him—couldn't let him go on, of course: "Oh, I say, you know! Not another word, my dear judge—I don't care a jolly hang, dash it!" And to show him, I smiled, got out a cigarette, and perched kind of sideways on the edge of the table. "I'm not a bit sensitive, don't you know!"

He stared. "Indeed, no—I see you are not!" he said warmly.

I drew a light a bit airily. "Of course," I puffed, "what you are thinking of is your servant, but I—I shot him a light wink—I've got to think a little about my own affair, don't you?"

"Lightnut!" He caught me by the arms, his face reddened almost black. "My dear boy, ten thousand pardons! I assure you—"

"That's just all right, judge," I reassured him soothingly. "All I am holding out for is just to be sure we understand each other about Francis—that I may be sure I have your authority—"

"So that's it!" He relaxed with a deep breath. Then quietly: "My dear boy, you make me ashamed of myself—I was rude!" And he shook my hand. "Yes, indeed—you just go right ahead; almost anything is preferable to the vicious life Francis is leading—anything!" He sighed and his voice dropped confidentially: "I'm afraid even you would be discouraged if I told you of one or two disgraceful episodes at Cambridge—I know Scoggins would be!"

Scoggins again—always Scoggins! Dash Scoggins! Of course he would be discouraged, but I should not. Devilish simple reason, you know—wouldn't believe it, by Jove!

"Yes, I learned all about it from my daughter when she came home," he proceeded gloomily: "she feels that in a measure it has marred Miss Kirkland's visit with her."

Miss Kirkland! I recalled now that that was the name of the girl from China. By Jove, I preferred to think of her as the tramp!

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OR WRITE

W. A. LALOR, General Passenger Agent,
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The Tree Butcher.

Fortunately the tree butcher has not been so busy in Monroe this season as usual. Monroe City is blessed with a fine lot of shade trees, but the larger per cent of these trees show the effects of bad care or rather poor judgment in shaping and training. Just why a person will persist in cutting out the top of a tree is one of the unsolved mysteries and one which seems no nearer solution as the world moves on. Of course orchardist and fruit raisers have learned to prune their trees properly, but as a usual thing most anyone is allowed to whack away on a shade tree without regard to conditions or knowledge of the business. The most grand and beautiful object in the whole vegetable

kingdom is the tree and most any kind of tree is beautiful or can be made so by very little care and patience. The first object in planting trees in parks, lawns and along highways is for the shade they afford and the next is to beautify. Now why not care for a shade tree with a view of obtaining these objects in the shortest time and leaving the tree in the best possible condition. Improper training retards the growth of a tree and to cut the top out of it shortens its life.

Down in the state of Mississippi four farmers fought with shot guns over a dog. There is only one of them living now and he is in jail charged with murder.

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